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ABSTRACT

The hypothesis that monolingual and bilingual German-Canadian speakers differ in their attitudes toward German language and culture and in their achievement in the study of German was tested. The results were compared to those obtained by Gardner and Lambert in their French-American studies, in which it was found that home language background is the distinctive criterion which permits discrimination between the attitudes of monolinguals and bilinguals with respect to a foreign culture. For the questionnaire used in this study, seven attitude scales found in the work of L.A. Jacobovits were rewritten to fit the context of German language study. The questionnaire was administered in October, 1972, to 50 students in Beginning and Intermediate German at the University of Alberta, Canada. The results demonstrated that the home language background effect on student attitudes was not operative in the German-Canadian investigation. It was also shown that those students who, regardless of their home language background, held favorable attitudes toward German language and culture had the highest achievement in German. (PM)

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DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ATTITUDES OF FRENCH-AMERICAN AND GERMAN-CANADIAN SPEAKERS TOWARD THE FOREIGN CULTURE

by Manfred Prokop

A recent book by Gardner and Lambert (1972) summarizes important background conceptualizations and research projects undertaken by the authors, their associates and others in Canada and the United States in the area of the role of attitudes and motivation in second-language learning. According to Gardner and Lambert, foreign language achievement is a function of aptitude and intelligence as well as of a sympathetic orientation toward the other cultural group. The concepts of instrumental and integrative orientation towards the learning task are developed; the former refers to a student's perceiving the main value of foreign language study in utilitarian terms while the latter characterizes a student who wants to learn as much as possible about the other cultural group and desires to become a member in it. (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, p. 3). The authors studied students' perceptions of the European, Canadian and American French sub-cultures, of American-English culture in the Philippines, and of Hebrew-Canadian culture, and analyzed their effect on several student variables.

In the following, the hypothesis will be tested that mono-lingual and bi-lingual German-Canadian speakers will differ in their attitudes towards German language and culture and in their achievement in the German course. Subsequently, these data will be compared with results obtained by Gardner and Lambert in their French-American studies. It is hoped that this paper will contribute towards a better understanding of students' perceptions of a foreign culture and their effect on achievement.

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Instrumentation

Seven attitude scales found in Jacobovits (1970, pp. 263-271) were rewritten to fit the context of German language study. In calculating scale values, two adjustments had to be made: first, in order to compensate for the different numbers of items in the questionnaires used by Gardner and Lambert and the present one, scale means were obtained by dividing scale totals by the number of items in the respective scale. Furthermore, while Gardner and Lambert had used a seven-point rating scale, this study employed a five-point scale. For purposes of comparability of results, scale means were divided by 7 or 5, respectively; this procedure produced a percentage which indicated the extent to which actual response levels approached maximum total size. Differences between these percentage were subsequently tested for with the usual methods (Guilford, 1965, pp. 185-187).

Subjects

The questionnaire was administered in October 1972 to fifty students in Beginners and Intermediate German at the University of Alberta. Of the 28 students in the first-year course, only two students indicated some home language background, whereas of the 22 students in second-year German 10 had learned some German at home.

Results and discussion

Gardner and Lambert's work rests on the empirical finding that home language background is the distinctive criterion which permits discrimination between the attitudes of mono-linguals and bi-lin-

guals vis-à-vis a foreign culture. Their definition of "bi-lingual" in the context of the French-American studies states that students "came from homes where one or both parents regularly use the French language in communication, that is where students would have had the opportunity to learn at least to speak French from their parents and siblings" (p. 63), or that students "came from homes where French was the main (but not exclusive) language of communication" (p. 71). Both definitions characterize the language background of the Alberta "bi-lingual" speakers. Implicit in the above statements is, of course, the suggestion that the family - in addition to imparting language skills - also mediates perceptions of the foreign culture, its values, expectations, and sanctions. Knowing the foreign language can then, at least to a minimum extent, be equated with "knowing" the foreign culture; this knowledge, in turn, may be expected to affect students' attitudes towards the foreign culture.

The purpose of this paper is to test the hypothesis that differences in perceptions of German culture, if any, held by Albertan mono-lingual and "bi-lingual" students can be attributed to the latter's home language background. This hypothesis had to be rejected. Groupings by course level or home language background did not discriminate between attitudes held, nor was home language background related in any consistent way to achievement in German (Table 1).

It must be concluded that the home language background effect on student attitudes which was observed repeatedly by Gardner and Lambert in their French-American studies was not operative in this

TABLE 1

ATTITUDE SCORES FOR THE MONO-LINGUAL AND BI-LINGUAL AMERICAN AND ALBERTAN GROUPS

Groups	N	Percentages of Maximum Attitude Scores						
		German-Canadian Attitudes	Anomie	Ethnocentrism	Cultural Allegiance	F-Scale	Instrumental Orientation	Integrative Orientation
Louisiana								
A French-American	80	78.29	51.29	66.29	55.57	72.86	65.00	79.29
B American (1 year)	72	70.14	37.43	59.58	46.86	67.71	44.43	60.00
C American (2 years)	24	72.29	35.86	57.29	43.00	64.86	47.14	60.43
Maine								
D French-American	98	77.00	49.29	69.71	58.86	73.71	77.43	76.43
E American (1 year)	75	66.14	38.57	61.14	41.29	66.43	47.00	53.86
F American (2 years)	36	63.00	41.43	52.43	37.57	62.00	47.86	56.71
G American (3 years)	34	61.43	38.86	49.29	36.14	62.29	37.00	54.14
Alberta								
H All	50	64.20	53.80	46.00	52.00	54.00	52.00	67.00
I Beginners German	27	64.40	51.40	44.20	51.00	52.60	49.40	66.60
J Intermediate G.	23	63.80	56.80	48.00	53.00	55.80	55.40	67.20
K Home Language	12	63.80	52.20	43.00	52.80	53.60	56.20	68.40
L No Home Language	38	64.20	54.40	46.80	51.60	54.20	51.00	66.40

A-H:	A-H:	D-H:	
2.28 *	2.20 *	3.16 **	
A-I:	A-I:	D-I:	
2.03 *	1.98 *	2.85 **	
A-L:	A-L:	D-J:	
2.02 *	2.01 *	2.15 *	
D-H:	D-H:	D-L:	
2.81 **	2.41 *	3.02 **	
D-I	D-I:		
2.45 *	2.10 *		
D-L:	D-L:		
2.49 *	2.19 *		

Note: Data for the Louisiana and Maine studies were obtained from Gardner and Lambert, Attitudes and Motivation in Second-Language Learning, pp. 88-94, and were converted to percentages of maximum scores obtainable by the procedure described on p. 2.

* $p \leq .05$

** $p \leq .01$

investigation of German-Canadian speakers' attitudes. Three sets of interpretations are possible:

a. In imparting the German language skills, the family did not transmit any perceptions of German language and culture at all so that students acquired the all-Alberta perceptions.

b. The family's perceptions of German culture were rejected by the students, and all-Alberta perceptions were substituted for them.

c. The family's perceptions of German culture coincided with all-Alberta perceptions. This perceptual identity could have been purely accidental in that German attitudes towards German culture resembled all-Alberta attitudes, or - most likely - it could have been the result of a deliberate process of filtering original attitudes through the Alberta cultural values grid.

The status of the "bi-lingual" speaker and his sub-culture within the society at large thus must be attributed greater significance. How open is a society to ethnic pluralism? Does the foreign culture exist as a beleaguered sub-culture whose continued existence its members sincerely want to preserve? Or does the student have only an academically aloof interest in the culture of his parents? Does the sub-culture and its associated values command sufficient prestige with the family, the peer group, and other cultural groups to warrant exposure as being "different"?

A comparison of French-American and Alberta students reveals that the former were significantly more ethno-centric and authoritarian in their attitudes than their German-Canadian counterparts, and

took much more pride in French customs and traditions than did the "bi-lingual" Canadians vis-à-vis German culture. They were also significantly more instrumentally oriented in terms of their motivation to acquire the foreign language than the Albertans.

A comparative analysis of American and Albertan mono-linguals shows no significant differences in attitudes at all between the two groups. It appears therefore that both American mono-linguals' and Alberta students' attitudes towards the foreign language and culture were representative of the population universe, and that French-American attitudes as observed by Gardner and Lambert must derive from a cultural, not merely linguistic factor.

The analysis of the relationship between Alberta student attitudes and achievement as measured by the cumulative term mark and the final exam mark showed that - regardless of home language background - favorable German-Canadian attitudes and integrative orientation were positively related to the term mark (Table 2). No consistent relationship existed between the other attitude scales and achievement.

Summary

The analysis of attitudes of mono- and bi-lingual Alberta students towards German language and culture showed no significant differences with home language background as the criterion. In a comparison with French-American students, both Alberta groups were not significantly different from the American mono-linguals, while they had lower ethnocentric and authoritarian attitudes and a lower instrumental orientation than the French-American bi-linguals. The

TABLE 2

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STUDENT ATTITUDES AND ACHIEVEMENT

Attitude Scales	Achievement Criterion	
	Term Mark	Final Exam Mark
German-Canadian Attitudes	.308 *	.130
Anomie	-.048	-.011
Ethnocentrism	.013	.113
Cultural Allegiance	-.058	.071
California F-Scale	.020	.122
Instrumental Orientation	-.172	-.028
Integrative Orientation	.282 *	.111

* $p \leq .05$ at .279 with 48 df

hypothesis was advanced that home language background may not be equated on a one-to-one basis with holding perceptions different from the population at large, but rather that the status, prestige, and attractiveness of the foreign sub-culture may have a mediating effect on perceptions of the foreign culture. Those students who - regardless of their home language background - held favorable attitudes towards German language and culture and wanted to be as much as possible to be like one of its members had the highest achievement in German.

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